

Transportation

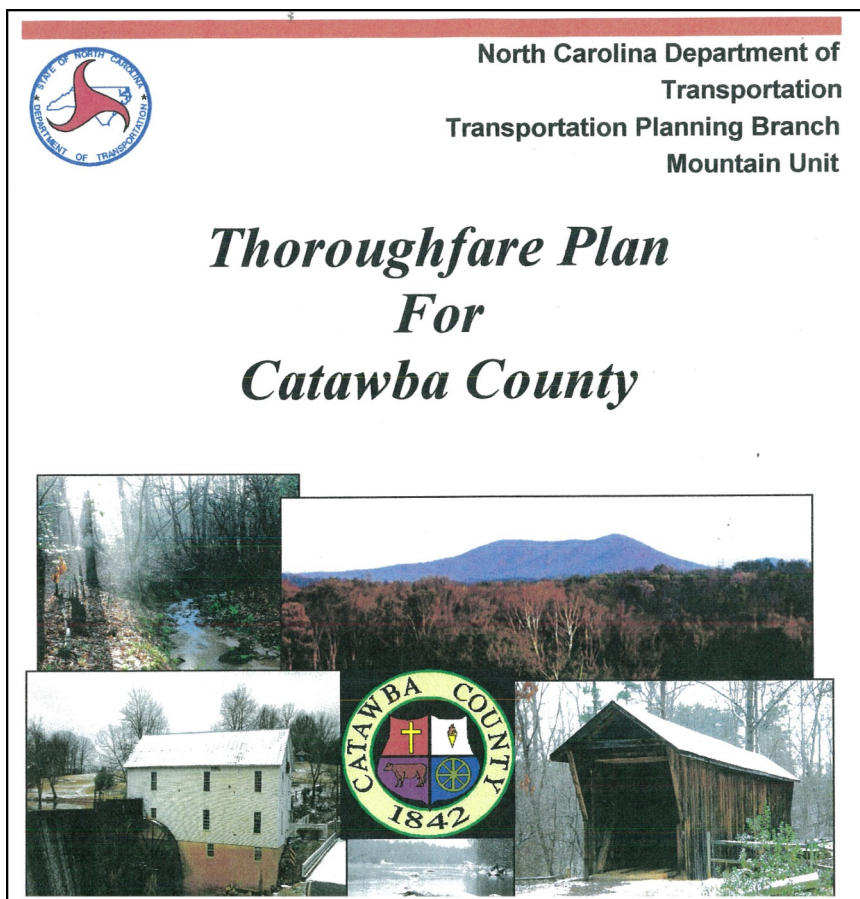
ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

The NCDOT Secondary Road system serves the Plan area, except for the state highways, NC 150 and NC 16. NC 150 is a minor arterial recently recognized as a Strategic Highway Corridor. It passes through the southeastern portion of Catawba County, connecting Mooresville, Lincolnton, and Shelby. NC 16, the other minor arterial, bisects the Plan area from north to south and connects areas south of Charlotte to north of Jefferson, North Carolina.

Average daily traffic counts (number of vehicles per day or ADT) are available for various locations in the Plan area. Data for 2003 through 2009 are actual numbers recorded on site. Traffic projections for 2025 are based on NCDOT modeling. *See Table 5: Average Daily Traffic Count.*

Transportation

Roads and Highways	1
Pedestrian and Bicycle System	5
Transit System	7
Guiding Principles	7
Plan Goals	8

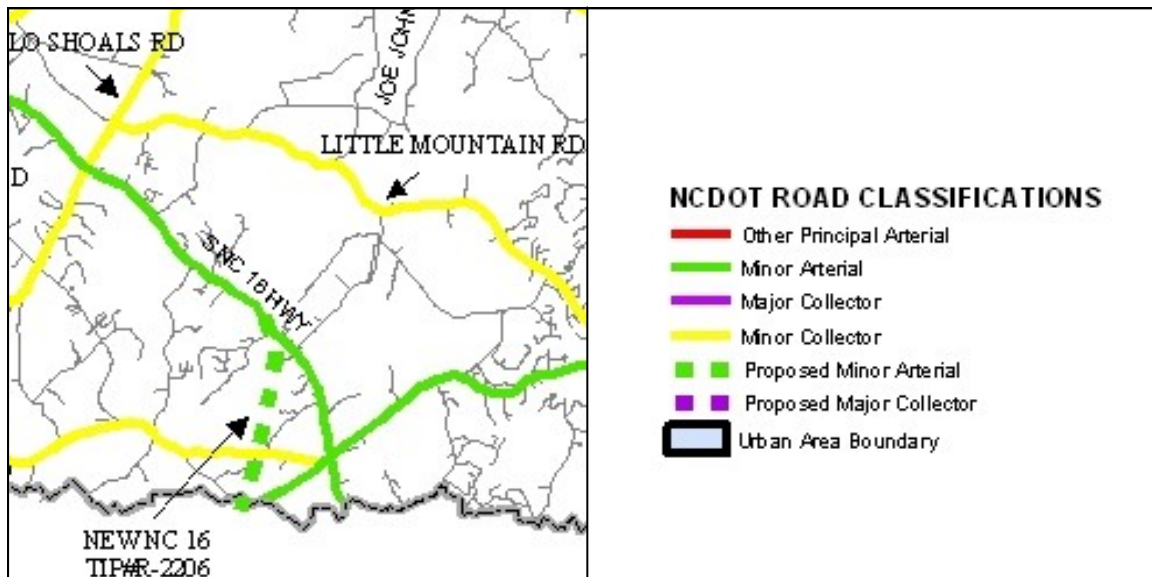


**Table 5: 16 South Corridor Development Plan
Average Daily Traffic Count**

	NC 150 (West of NC 16)	NC 16 (South of NC 150)	East Maiden— SR 1855 (West of NC 150)	Anderson Mountain Road— SR 1857 (South of NC 16)	Mt. Beulah Road— SR 1846 (South of Little Mtn. Road)	NC 16 Bypass
2003	12,000	12,000	3,100	650	620	N/A
2005	12,000	13,000	2,900	560	590	N/A
2007	12,000	14,000	2,700	570	630	N/A
2009	12,000	13,000	2,700	550	680	N/A
2025	26,000	5,000	4,300	N/A	N/A	16,000

Source: NCDOT AADT Maps, 2003-2009; and 2007 Thoroughfare Plan for Catawba County (for 2025 projections)

Note: Traffic count projections (Year 2025) are provided for segments of transportation facilities while average daily counts are taken at specific locations.



Portion of County Thoroughfare Plan (2007) Depicting Road Classifications for the 16 South Corridor Area

The 2009 ADT counts generally represent a decrease from the 2007 counts, which is representative of the traffic counts found throughout the MPO region. It is thought that the downturn in the economy, with the resulting loss in jobs and reduction in disposable income, is the basis for the decline in the traffic counts.

Transportation planning for the Plan area is coordinated by the Unifour Rural Planning Organization (RPO). The RPO provides opportunities for local officials of rural areas outside of the urban areas to work with NCDOT toward development of short-range and long-range transportation planning for rural areas. Future transportation needs for the NC 150, NC 16, NC 16 Bypass, and East Maiden Road are included in the Thoroughfare Plan for Catawba County (2007).

The Thoroughfare Plan for Catawba County (2007), adopted by the County Board of Commissioners and North Carolina Board of Transportation, documents findings of a study performed by NCDOT to update the 1991 County Thoroughfare Plan. This Plan is multi-modal and will guide the planning and development of the rural area's transportation systems for a 25-year horizon period. The Transportation Plan covers recommendations for road improvements in the corridor area which include road widening and construction of new road facilities within the Plan area.

The Thoroughfare Plan includes several projects that impact the Plan area. Following is a general description of the projects and the funding status which are depicted on *Map 7: Transportation Recommendations* with a Road Project (RP) reference number that corresponds to the map.

NC 150 (RP-1):

The entire section of NC 150 in the Plan area is expected to exceed its capacity for a 2-lane road over the next 25 years. It is recommended that the road be widened to a 4-lane divided boulevard with a grass median. This project is unfunded in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

NC 16, North of Intersection with new NC 16 Bypass (RP-2):

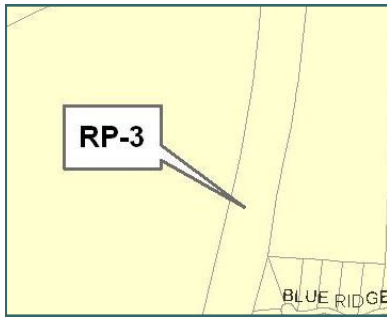
This 2-lane road operates at a level that has reasonable flow, but can deteriorate quickly with additional traffic. As such, concerns are that the 4-lane sections of NC 16



NC 150



NC 16, Above Intersection with
NC 16 Bypass



NC 16 Bypass

to the north and south will contribute significantly to traffic problems along this 2-lane section. This section is expected to nearly exceed capacity within the next 25 years. Improvements to NC 16 are scheduled in the STIP with right-of-way acquisition in 2013 and completion in 2016.

NC 16 Bypass (RP-3):

This facility parallels the existing NC 16 starting in Gaston County, ending just north of Tower Road (SR 1895) as it merges with existing NC 16. It is expected to be completed in 2011.

East Maiden Road (RP-4):

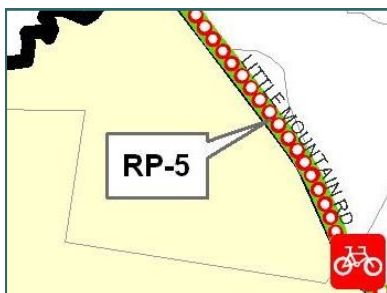
This road connects the Town of Maiden to the NC 150/16 area passing through rural landscapes offering vistas of Anderson Mountain. The Balls Creek SAP recommends exploring the designation of this road as a NCDOT Scenic Byway and the Thoroughfare Plan recommends minor widening for safety reasons when funding is available.



East Maiden Road

Little Mountain Road (RP-5):

This road parallels a portion of Lake Norman and serves to connect NC 150 to the Balls Creek Community. It is also an alternative route to NC 16 for area residents. The Thoroughfare Plan recommends minor widening for safety reasons when funding is available.



Little Mountain Road

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SYSTEM

Pedestrian and bicycle system planning for the County has been conducted over the last five years and is formulated in several documents: The Greater Hickory Recreation/Tourism Plan (2006), Catawba County Master Parks and Recreation Plan (2007), and the Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan (2010). These plans have identified pedestrian and bicycle trail segments within the Plan area:

Alternative Thread Trail Route —This proposed 5.49 mile greenway segment extends from the Mathis Church Road/Little Mountain Road intersection southeast along Little Mountain Road then south following Mt. Beulah Road to NC 16. It then continues south to Bucks Garage Road where it heads southwest to East Maiden Road

where it once again goes southeast to the County line. This route serves as an alternative to the primary Thread Trail route, but could also provide greater connectivity to the primary Thread Trail.

In addition to the trail projects above, the Sherrills Ford and Balls Creek Small Area plans recommended several on-road bicycle routes throughout the Plan area which have been incorporated into a draft NCDOT Bicycle Route Map. The draft map and signing project, funded by NCDOT, is expected to be completed in 2012.

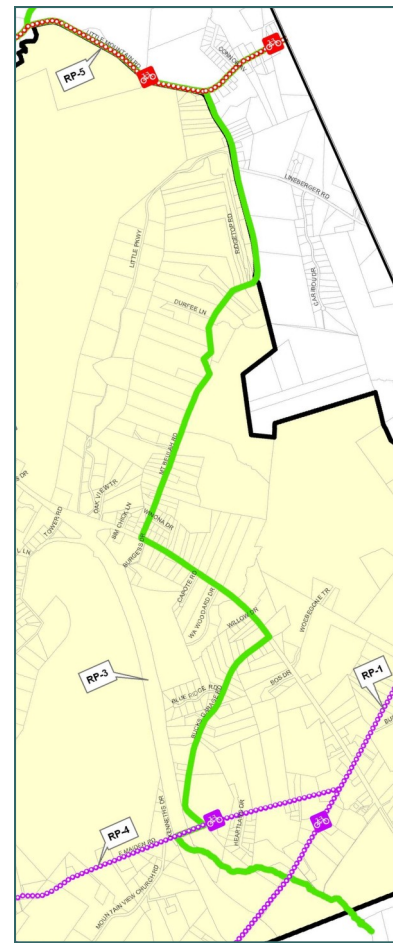
The proposed pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the Plan area are shown on *Map 7: Transportation Recommendations*.

In order to implement the planned pedestrian and bicycle facilities, Catawba County's Unified Development Ordinance requires improvements for new development. Sidewalk construction in new residential development is required when 25 or more lots are proposed within the R-20 or higher density districts. For less dense residential development, open space is required with a portion to be improved with a trail system. In addition, sidewalks are required along the frontage of new residential and non-residential developments on major thoroughfares in urban areas and major collectors or higher road classifications in rural areas. A fee-in lieu of option in place of sidewalk construction or the provision of open space may be allowed by the County. These funds are to be used for installation of sidewalks, trails, bicycle paths or capital projects based upon the identified needs in the County Master Parks and Recreation Plan. Bicycle parking facilities are required under the UDO when non-residential and multi-family developments are located within 500 feet of bicycle corridors in officially adopted bikeway plans and within the Mixed Use Corridor-Overlay.

It is now the policy of the MPO and NCDOT to evaluate any new road construction project for potential pedestrian needs (i.e., sidewalks and crossover) and bicycle accommodations.

TRANSIT SYSTEM

A consolidated public transportation system was estab-



Thread Trail Alternative
and Bike Routes



Greenway Transit Bus



CATS Transit Bus

lished in 2008; whereby, the community transportation network provided by the Piedmont Wagon Transit System was combined with the other Unifour systems to become the Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority. The new system now operates under the Greenway Public Transportation program providing limited transit services to the Plan area. Vans are available five days per week to transport senior citizens and disabled residents; however, no fixed Greenway routes currently exist in the Plan area. The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) also has a vanpool that extends into southeastern Catawba County providing transportation to several different locations in Charlotte.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principals were carried forward from the adopted/accepted Sherrills Ford and Balls Creek Small Area Plans and serve as a foundation for the goals and Plan Action Strategies (PASs).

ROADS & HIGHWAYS

- TP-1 Anticipate and plan for growth that will result from road improvements and widening.
- TP-2 Preserve good roads, areas of low traffic and scenic highways.
- TP-3 Provide for the interconnection of new developments and, where practical, connections to existing neighborhoods.
- TP-4 Encourage alternate modes of transportation, including increased use of existing means such as public buses, school buses, railroads, bicycles and pedestrian.
- TP-5 Future road corridors should be protected from new development in order to preserve the right-of-way for new roads or widening of existing roads.



Pedestrian—Sidewalk System

PEDESTRIAN SYSTEM

- TP-7 Provide safe alternatives for pedestrians and include traffic calming techniques in developments.

BICYCLE SYSTEM

- TP-8 Provide safe options for bicyclists as higher density development takes place.

TRANSIT SYSTEM

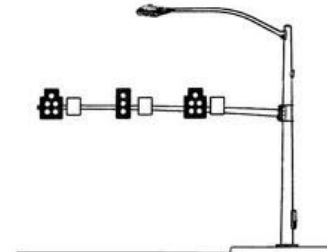
- TP-9 Increase opportunities to link with existing transit routes and explore the long-term feasibility of transit service linkages to Mooresville and Mecklenburg County.

PLAN GOALS

Catawba County does not maintain roads and therefore the following recommendations will be forwarded to NCDOT or used in area-wide transportation planning. The transportation goals are depicted on *Map 7: Transportation Recommendations*. Note: A Transportation Goal (TG) reference number is depicted on the map representing specific project sites.

ROADS & HIGHWAYS

- TG-1 Continue working through the Rural Planning Organization to encourage NCDOT to “fast track” NC 16 (4-lane) between Tower Road and Claremont Road.
- TG-2 Create a service road system which will serve proposed and future developments within the Plan area more specifically around NC 16 Bypass, NC 150, and NC 16. This process will be undertaken by the developer in coordination with NCDOT based upon a site specific development plan (not depicted on *Map 7*).
- TG-3 Provide a “gateway” into the County possibly using signage and/or landscaping in the vicinity of the NC 16 Bypass and NC 150 intersection. This “gateway” feature could be a standardized design for similar entryways into the County.
- TG-4 Explore having East Maiden Road (SR 1855) designated by NCDOT as a Scenic Byway.
- TG-5 Replace existing signalization systems with “mast arm” design along NC 150 intersections.



“Mast Arm” Traffic Signal





Bike Lane

TG-6 Realignment of the intersection of East Maiden Road and NC 150.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SYSTEM

TG-7 Promote the Carolina Thread Trail project to prospective businesses that are looking to locate in the Plan area.

TG-8 Encourage NCDOT to complete the Countywide Bicycle Mapping and Signage project.

TRANSIT SYSTEM

TG-9 Develop a “Park and Ride” lot on the Bridgewater site at NC 150/NC 16 Bypass interchange.

TG-10 Promote the expansion of the Greenway Public Transportation and Charlotte Area Transit systems to service the area (not depicted on *Map 7*).

